

State of Arizona
Child Support Guidelines Review Committee

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Proposed 2011 Guidelines
COBS – A Large Potential Impact on the Courts

Honorable Membership:

From Administrative Order No 2008-22,

PHASE II:

Contingent upon available funding as determined by the Administrative Director, the Committee shall investigate and report its findings and recommendations on the advantages and disadvantages of implementing a forward-looking method of calculating child support and its potential impact on the courts. Issues to be considered may include costs of implementation, training, and programming changes or costs associated with the development of a child support calculator.

The committee to date has yet to report the “potential impact on the courts.”

To assist the committee in the fulfillment of AO 2008-22 as directed by the Chief, I present the following information.

As the Chief did not define “potential impact”, I have chosen to define “potential impact” with the following question: “What is the potential case load that will be created by COBS?”

I estimate that 72% of child support orders will qualify for a modification.

I developed this estimate using the following method.

From the State Courts office, I have acquired the 2007 Case File data used by Center for Policy Research.

I have assumed that a child support order qualifies for a modification if its payment amount changes by 15% or more.

I used 40 of these cases as a sample; the ones for which spousal maintenance was ordered. I used the “order amount” of the existing order, and then computed the “new amount” that would occur under COBS.

According to the 2009 report of the US Department of Child Support Enforcement, there are 211,089 Title IV-D cases in Arizona. Using an estimated ratio of 50/50 for Title IV-D versus non-Title IV-D cases, there are approximately 422,000 active support cases in Arizona.

COBS produces a potential case load of 303,840 child support payment modifications.

Yours truly,

T. T. Frank

References

Reference 1) Chief Justice Ruth McGregor, *Administrative Order No 2008-22*, February 26, 2008, p. 1. Attached.